

GODMANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE QUEEN ELIZABETH SCHOOL ON THURSDAY 21 JUNE 2001

PRESENT: Councillor R NORRIS, Town Mayor
Councillors M COHEN, D COMBEN, A GOFF, A HOOKER,
Mrs H HULL, Mrs MOORE, S SPENCER, A SURSHAM,
G WILSON, C VANE PERCY
Town Clerk: W D BUTTERWORTH

APOLOGIES: Councillors Mrs A LOOKER, Mrs P TYLER, Mrs M FOSTER (at Police Group), E KYNOCH,

PRESENT: 1 member of the public.

TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that he had represented the Town on 10 occasions since the last meeting. The Deputy Mayor had represented the Town at 1 event.

The Mayor had been contacted by the primary school in Wertheim with an invitation to take part in a schools' video project for children aged 8 to 10 years. The headteachers of the GMC primary School and St Anne's School had agreed to participate and the relevant details had been passed to Germany.

The Mayor reminded the Council that Mr Foren, the Mace Bearer, had decided to retire and asked that all councillors advertised the vacancy to likely candidates.

01/035 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 May 2001 were APPROVED and signed as an accurate and complete record.

01/036 MATTERS ARISING

The Outstanding Actions List dated 21 June 2001 was reviewed. The following matters arising from the last meeting were incomplete or required further action: (actions assigned to WPs are dealt with in the appropriate report).

Councillor Mrs MOORE arrived at 7.36 pm
Councillor SURSHAM arrived at 7.39 pm

00/043 Tree planting on the verges – Councillor COMBEN advised that the next step would be to consult residents in the immediate vicinity of the proposed sites.

00/094 (JF) Application to Football Foundation – Councillor GOFF confirmed that the item could be CLOSED.

01/022 Wall between Parish Church and Primary School – the investigation with CCC was complete but had failed to identify the legal ownership. Action CLOSED. Councillor VANE PERCY offered new information and the matter was referred to the Property WP for further consideration.

01/034 (Env) Willow pollarding – the Town Clerk was to accept the HDC offer to assess the willows on the Recreation Ground to see if they qualified under the scheme.

01/034 (Env) A14 underpass litterbin – it was AGREED that the bin would be added to the Town's Ground Maintenance contract for emptying twice per week.

01/037 CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence listed at [Appendix A](#) not covered by the WP reports was addressed.

Action for Market Towns Regional Seminar – Councillor Mrs LOOKER had volunteered to attend. The Town Clerk was to complete the Registration forms. Councillors asked that Councillor Looker endeavoured to discover what benefits might accrue to Godmanchester if it were to be formally designated a Market Town.

The Council noted that Mr Mike Simpson had been appointed to fill the new Cambridgeshire Constabulary role of Community Contact Co-ordinator.

The Mayor announced that he now had a detailed programme for the Twinning Sportsfest Visit in September. He asked that Councillor Mrs TYLER make proposals for the opening ceremony in the QES (9.30 to 10.30 am on 24 September – 120 children, 6 civic guests and 10 Twinning Association members) and for the Godmanchester Civic function on the evening of 26 September (Civic guests and hosts). The Mayor noted that the Town Clerk would be away on holiday for the whole period.

Councillor VANE PERCY volunteered to attend the Environment Agency Flood Warning Meeting. The Town Clerk was to advise the EA that a weekday evening in either September or October was preferred.

The Councillors noted the letter of thanks regarding the Council's participation in National Spring Clean 2001.

The Mayor advised the Council that Lady Linda Vane Percy had written to complain about litter in the Town. The Town Clerk had replied. After a lengthy discussion about litter and related topics it was decided to refer the matter to the Environment WP for recommendations.

The Council noted that the guest speaker at the August 2001 meeting would be Mr Michael Lynch from the Huntingdonshire Primary Care Trust.

The Council ACCEPTED the kind offer from the Friends of the QES to provide a Christmas Tree in the QES porch next Yuletide.

01/038 ACCOUNTS

The accounts set out in Appendix B were APPROVED.

The Town Clerk was to advise the Civic Society that the animal proof fencing around the new Lime Trees on The Avenue was in place and had been paid for. The Society was, therefore, to be invited to make its award of £300 towards the work as promised.

01/039 GRANTS

The Mayor opened the item by reminding the Council of its powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972. Councillor Mrs MOORE advised the councillors that the total sum available at this meeting for the half-yearly awards to clubs and charities was circa £2000. The Council then considered 10 applications for grants under S137. The following was DECIDED:

Church of St Mary the Virgin Godmanchester – An award of £1200 towards the annual insurance of the Church. This sum was not included in the allowance for the half-yearly grants.

The Royal British Legion (Poppy Appeal) – It was AGREED that the usual donation of £30 for the Remembrance Wreath would be increased to £100 for one year only.

East Anglian Air Ambulance – The Council realised that this request did not fall within the normal parameters of the half-yearly grants but DECIDED on a one-off award of £150 towards the start-up costs of this new service.

Women's Royal Voluntary Service – An award of £150.

Jack & Jill Pre-School – An award of £300 towards the cost of new equipment.

Godmanchester Senior Citizens Club – An award of £300 towards the cost of new crockery.

Godmanchester Baptist Church – An award of £400 towards the Summer Holiday Club.

Godmanchester under-9B Football Team – A grant of £400 for the purchase of new football strip.

Riverside Rangers Football Club – A grant £200 for the purchase of football equipment.

Godmanchester Community Swimming Pool – It was AGREED that the Town Council would subsidise swimming for children under 16 years of age during the school summer holidays. The subsidy would be 50 pence per child per session for children living in Godmanchester and 10 pence per child per session for children coming from elsewhere. The total subsidy was not to exceed £1000. An initial payment of £500 was to be made to start the scheme off. The balance would be paid at the end of the holiday following the submission of accounts and attendance figures. This subsidy did not form part of the half-yearly grants.

01/040 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

The applications and correspondence set out in [Appendix C](#) were considered. The Town Clerk was to advise HDC of the Council's recommendations.

The Council noted the amended plan for Rectory Farm, which provided for a wider entrance road and improved screening. However, the Town Clerk was to reiterate the Council's initial objections namely that the site was outside the Town Limits, was not designated in the Local Plan for industrial use and required access from a busy main road thus creating a hazard. Moreover, existing office space in Godmanchester was unused.

The Town Clerk was also to seek further clarification about the hydro-relief valves at 4A The Avenue. The planning permission made no mention of technical specification, physical location (particularly height) or the maintenance and inspection regime.

01/041 WORKING PARTY (WP) REPORTS

Finance. The Finance WP made the following recommendations which were all AGREED:

The standing arrangements for the Civic Service should be unchanged for 2001.

The Annual Premium for the Council's Insurance should be approved.

The quotation in the sum of £407.90 for the repair of the Log Play-area following the fire should be accepted.

That the Town Clerk should purchase 50 new video tapes for the CCTV system at a cost of £125 + VAT and that an annual maintenance contract for the system at a cost of £250 + VAT should be set in place. The contract should be for one year only and would be reviewed in 2002.

Environment. The WP met on 29 May 2001. Councillor COMBEN provided a written record of the meeting. He also reported that he had already provided comments on an HDC draft strategy for the Inspection and Identification of Contaminated Land in order to meet a short deadline.

The following recommendations were made:

Godmanchester should accept the offer from HDC to install and maintain a Tourist Information Point (TIP) in the Town. The Town Clerk was to request that a double-sided TIP be provided with one side available to the Town Council to display the Town Guide and local notices. The Town Council also wished to be involved in the selection of the location for the display. AGREED.

That a quotation from Ashley & Foster in the sum of £218.00 + VAT for painting the 7 iron lamp-posts on the Recreation Ground with black metal paint be accepted. AGREED.

That the quotation for the pruning of the Willow trees be rejected as too expensive. AGREED. Councillor HOOKER offered to lead a self-help group to do the work at 10 am on Sunday, 1 July 2001. Councillors were invited to assist.

The decision on the quotation for the pruning of the shrubbery at Devana Park should be delayed until the end of the year. AGREED.

The quotation for ad hoc litter picking at JF not be taken up until the situation had been reviewed and the need established. AGREED.

The Town Clerk should write to HDC to ask for a progress report on the required tree surgery for the Lime Trees on The Avenue.

Finally, Councillor COMBEN asked that the efforts made by Councillor Mrs HULL over many years to progress the infilling of the Lime Trees on The Avenue be formally acknowledged.

The next meeting of the WP would be at 8 pm on Thursday, 5 July 2001 at 26 Earning Street.

Councillor VANE PERCY left the meeting at 9.58 pm

Recreation and Amenities. The WP had not met but Councillor SPENCER had been to a meeting with Margaret Ward and Inspector Alderson to discuss vandalism and unsociable behaviour.

Councillor SPENCER reported that, as yet, there was no 3rd party funding for the Recreation Ground play-park project. He was, however, pursuing a number of possible sources. He was also seeking quotations for additional tarmac for the skatepark area. He announced that there would be a skate board tournament during Gala Week and that he would ensure that HDC carried out any necessary repairs to the equipment before the event.

The next meeting would be at Judith's Field at 8 pm on Thursday, 12 July 2001.

Property. The WP had met 19 May 2001.

Councillor SURSHAM reported that he had obtained 2 quotations for the restoration of the Church walls, railings and gates. The lowest quotation was significantly more than the initial estimate of circa £40,000. The Town Council had previously allocated £10,000 per year for 2 years towards the work but in the light of the higher costs there was a need for the Council to review its approval of the project. Nevertheless the PCC had given its approval and it was AGREED that Councillor SURSHAM could submit a full planning application to HDC at a cost of £47.50. This would then allow him to apply for the grants that were dependent on planning permission being granted.

Councillor Mrs HULL left the meeting at 10.25 pm.

Councillor SURSHAM advised the Council that the Friends of the QES had requested permission to install a dehumidifier in the Porch Museum. He recommended that this be permitted. AGREED. However, the Town Clerk was to determine the likely running costs of the machine and operating regime.

There had been a request from users of the QES for lace curtains to prevent youngsters peering in during dance classes and the like. The Town Clerk volunteered to investigate solutions and costs.

Cemetery. The WP had met on 30 May 2001 to discuss the future management of the London Road Cemetery after 1 April 2002 when responsibility would pass from HDC to

Godmanchester Town Council. Councillor COHEN provided a written report which covered 4 topics.

Administration Charges should be in line with those currently made by HDC. The Town Clerk had sought a detailed breakdown of costs for the fiscal year 00/01. A comprehensive list of local undertakers was required so that they could be informed of the changes. This had been requested from HDC. It was proposed that the responsibility for arranging pegging-out and grave digging should be passed to the undertakers. The cemetery regulations would be kept in the Town Office. A proposal to have a notice board in the cemetery was not favoured. There would be no restrictions on opening times for visitors to the cemetery. However, only people who had lived in or had a direct link with Godmanchester would be entitled to be buried there.

Cemetery Extension HDC had advised that a S106 agreement to retain some of the land to the north was inappropriate. However, land to the south was considered by the WP to be unsuitable. The matter was referred back to the WP for further consideration.

Lawning It had been decided that there would be no exceptions to the lawning regulations. However, a Garden of Remembrance within the cemetery might allow relatives to plant shrubs or display floral tributes. The suggestion prompted considerable debate and it was clear that there were strong arguments both for and against. The WP was asked to prepare detailed proposals. In the meantime it was important that the lawning plans were advertised widely. Known next-of-kin had been contacted but there could be no guarantee that everyone with an interest had been advised. The Town Clerk was to prepare a letter for inclusion in the local press giving the outline information and inviting interested parties to contact him.

Trees and Gravestones The tree planting had been completed and pruning had been tasked to the contractor. Following the recent flooding a number of headstones were no longer upright and at least one had fallen down. The Town Clerk was to contact HDC to tell them to take the appropriate actions.

Finally, the Town Clerk confirmed that he was making arrangements for Mrs Hakimi to receive cemetery administration training with HDC and Huntingdon Town Council.

Judith's Field. The WP had not met. Councillor GOFF reported that the architect was preparing the planning application paperwork. Brampton Parish Council had consulted a solicitor who had suggested that it might be possible for a Council to run a facility like the new Judith's Field rather than have trustees. Councillor GOFF would investigate and report back to the Town Council

Other Representative Groups.

There were no reports from other representative groups.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was AGREED that the Town Clerk should send a copy of the Town Council's views on the A14 proposals to the Town's newly elected Cambridgeshire County Councillor.

The Town Clerk was to progress the longstanding request for warning signs outside The Chestnuts and Oak Tree Court on West Street. He was also to confirm that the red boxes recently painted on the access roads to Godmanchester would be marked with the 30 mph roundels.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 19 JULY 2001.

The meeting ended at 11.03 pm Town Mayor